

## Chapter 14

# Digital Literacy Niche in Academia: Endeavors and Digital Solutions for Young Smart Citizens

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### ABSTRACT

*With the awareness and proliferation of technology, the smart approach is possible to build a learning system or a smart city. The study aims to present the involvement of digital literacy in academics, making youth smart citizens, and assessing the continuous efforts at different levels. The study highlighted the mechanisms adopted by the libraries, such as training and other programmes, to enhance the digital literacy of the citizens. The chapter spotlighted the inclusion of digital literacy in academics, and with the adoption of digital solutions, young learners can become smart citizens. It also throws light on the impact of digital literacy during COVID-19 and digital literacy activities at JNU Central Library. A glimpse of the practices and measures adopted by the academic libraries to enrich the youth to make them smart citizens is provided, and a case example of an academic library (i.e., Jawaharlal Nehru University [JNU] Central Library) is considered for the study. Digital literacy has become an integral part of the youths' lives, and it supplements in making youth smart citizens would lead to smart city development.*

### INTRODUCTION

Digital literacy means that one should have the skills to fit in the environment and work in a society where communication and information are accessed through digital technologies. The information communicated with the digital technologies' adoption reached the users faster, and the information

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was timely. Digital literacy requires essential skills to adjust to the existing scenario where digitized information is preferred to access.

Digital literacies ultimately combine information and media literacy. In the digital literacy framework, it has been observed that Information literacy is an essential component. The assessment and usage of digital content in the highly disorganized web-based information scenario depends on the digital-savvy practices related to the published content beyond the libraries. Contrary to this, media literacy has not created a significant place in the “literacy publications” as a shared focus on scholarly materials (Alexander, 2017).

According to Martin (2008), digital literacy involves carrying out digital actions successfully within work, broader than ICT literacy, and the ability to be aware of oneself as a digitally literate person.

Digital literacy can be promoted by the following:

- First, learning and collaborating are done using social media platforms.
- Guidance may be provided to avoid plagiarism.
- Assist the students in maintaining the distractions caused by the undesired pop-ups.
- Learn to manage the online identity.

Long ago, Tornero (2004) described the four dimensions of digital literacy: operational, semiotic, cultural, and civic. Martin and Grudziecki (2006) recognized varying levels of digital literacy: “digital competence (skills, concepts, approaches, and attitudes), digital usage (application of digital competence within specific professional or domain contexts), and digital transformation (achieved when the digital usages which have been developed enable innovation and creativity, and stimulate significant change within the professional or knowledge domain)” (p.255).

The European Framework for Digital Literacy (EFDL), a product of the DigEuLit project and initiated to recognize the significance of digital literacy, defines digital literacy as follows:

*Digital literacy is the awareness, attitude, and ability of individuals to appropriately use digital tools and facilities to identify, access, manage, integrate, evaluate, analyze and synthesize digital resources, construct new knowledge, create media expressions, and communicate with others in the context of specific life situations, to enable constructive social action; and to reflect upon this process. (Martin, 2006, p.155)*

The American Library Association Office for Information Technology Policy (2013) has recommended developing DL competencies of “staff as a priority for local libraries and as part of their more comprehensive mission” (p. 2).

The objectives of the chapter are to: discern the insights into academia, and digital literacy influx, assess the ongoing efforts at various levels for digital citizens in the recent past, how libraries are considered a pivotal force in augmenting digital literacy, and share the example of JNU Library in exchanging the ideas and preparation of digital citizens.

## **Significance of the Chapter**

The efforts in the chapter have been in the direction of highlighting the involvement of digital literacy in academia and the digital solutions for young learners towards becoming smart citizens. It also focuses

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